

**VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY**  
25TH SENATE DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE  
ROOM 915  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PHONE: (518) 455-3451  
FAX: (518) 426-6854

DISTRICT OFFICE  
30 THIRD AVENUE, SUITE 207  
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11217  
PHONE: (718) 643-6140  
FAX: (718) 237-4137

E-MAIL: MONTGOME@NYSENATE.GOV

WEBSITE: MONTGOMERY.NYSENATE.GOV



**THE SENATE**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
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AGRICULTURE

CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME & CORRECTION

EDUCATION

FINANCE

HEALTH

August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of the State of New York  
Executive Chamber, State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12248

Re: State Central Register Bill (S6427A Montgomery/A8060 Jaffee)

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We are writing to respectfully request your immediate consideration of the State Central Register (SCR) Bill to increase the standard of proof for unfounded and indicated reports of neglect and the admissibility of reports of cases on neglect.

This legislation makes a differentiation between child neglect and child abuse. It also increases the standard regarding evidence for child neglect, which will ultimately relieve individuals from the prospect of being persecuted for the “crime” of being poor.

Our bill would ultimately reduce the harsh and disproportionate consequences of having an indicated case on the New York’s Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment. A shocking number of parents – over 47,000 thousand – are added to the SCR every year for child neglect. Most of these parents remain on this list for up to 28 years, are barred from numerous jobs as well as participating in activities at their children’s schools. The vast majority of the jobs that affect parents on the SCR are jobs most often performed by women, often-single heads of households, and people of color.

According to The New York Times in their story headlined, *The Child Abuse Charge Was Dismissed. But It Can Still Cost You a Job*, “In New York, it is especially easy to get on the database and arduous to be removed, amounting to a blacklist for many jobs, lawyers and parents said.” Additionally, WNYC reported on June 12, 2019, “There is widespread agreement that a system meant to help children is actually hurting some families by blocking job opportunities.”

This bill has support from the Legislature, passing in both houses overwhelmingly.

Additionally, thousands of constituents including those effected by the current State Central Register statute have contacted our offices in support of this legislation across the state. This bill also has a groundswell of support from advocacy groups and attorneys across the state including:

- New York State Defenders Association, Inc.
- New York City Bar



- Abbott House
- Adoptive and Family Foster Coalition of New York
- Arab-American Family Support center
- Bronx Defenders
- Brooklyn Defender Services
- Center for Family representation
- Children's Aid
- Children's Defense Fund-New York
- Children's Law Center
- Children's Village
- Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc.
- Coalition for Homeless Youth
- Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies
- Court Appointed Special Advocates of NYC
- Families Together in New York State
- Good Shepherd Services
- Graham Windham
- Harlem Dowling
- JCCA
- MercyFirst
- Neighborhood Defender Service
- NYS Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services
- NYS Kinship Navigator
- Northern Rivers Family of Services
- NYU Family Defense Clinic Washington Square Legal Services, Inc.
- RISE
- Rising Ground
- Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
- The Children's Agenda
- The Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services
- The Legal Aid Society
- Westchester Children's Association

Enclosed please find a sampling of the support letters, articles, and op-eds our offices have received on this bill. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our respective Legislative Directors below:

Racquel Saddler  
Saddler@nysenate.gov  
518-455-3456

Christina Philo  
philoc@nyassembly.gov  
518-455-5118

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.

Sincerely Yours,



Senator Velmanette Montgomery  
25<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Assemblyman Ellen Jaffee  
24<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

cc: Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State Senate  
Speaker Carl Heastie, New York State Assembly  
Axel Bernabe, Acting Counsel to the Governor  
Melissa DeRosa, Secretary to the Governor  
Shontell Smith, Counsel and Chief of Staff to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins  
Eric Katz, Deputy Counsel to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins